

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BOOKMARK

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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A. Field of the Invention

The present invention is directed to a plush toy that has use as a bookmark.

B. Discussion of the Prior Art

Bookmarks are well known, and plush toys having the shape, style and overall configuration of animal characters are also well known. It is also known, as illustrated in U.S. Patent No. 4,934,304, to place a uniquely configured and aesthetically pleasing figure, such as that of an animal, at one end of a clip, thus forming an abutment stop and which may be used as a bookmark.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a bookmark having a uniquely configured and aesthetically pleasing figure at both ends of a ribbon section of a bookmark to provide an abutment stop at the top and the bottom.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a bookmark having an upper terminus, a lower terminus and an elastomeric ribbon in between, for use as a bookmark on books of different heights.

If is a further object of the present invention to provide a small, plush toy which is adapted to function as a bookmark in a uncoiled position.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is front, side, perspective view of a first preferred embodiment of the present invention, shown in an expanded condition.

Figure 2 is a rear, side, perspective view of the Figure 1 embodiment in an expanded position.

Figure 3 is front, side, perspective view of the Figure 1 embodiment shown placed in a book and having its ribbon portion stretched.

Figure 4 is a rear, side, perspective view of the Figure 1 embodiment showing the ribbon in a partially wound condition.

Figure 5 is a rear, side, perspective, partial cross-sectional view of the Figure 1 embodiment shown with the ribbon in a fully coiled position.

Figure 6 is a front, side, perspective view of the Figure 1 embodiment shown with the ribbon in a fully coiled position.

5 Figure 7 is a front, side, perspective view of a second embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 8 is a rear, side, perspective view of the second, alternate embodiment.

10 Figure 9 is a front, side, perspective view of a third embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 10 is a rear, side, perspective view of a third embodiment of the present invention.

15 Figure 11 is a rear, side, perspective view of a fourth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

20 Figure 12 is a front, side, perspective view of a fourth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 13 is a front, side, perspective view of a fifth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

25 Figure 14 is a rear, side, perspective view of the fifth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 15 is a top, side, perspective view of a sixth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

5 Figure 16 is a bottom, side, perspective view of a sixth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 17 is a top, side, perspective view of an seventh preferred embodiment of the present invention.

10 Figure 18 is a bottom, side, perspective view of the seventh preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 19 is a bottom, side, perspective view of a eighth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

15 Figure 20 is a top, side, perspective view of the eighth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

20 Figure 21 is a top, side, perspective view of a ninth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 22 is a bottom, side, perspective view of the ninth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

25 Figure 23 is a bottom, side, perspective view of a tenth alternate preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 24 is a top, side, perspective view of the tenth alternate preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT(S)

5 Referring to Figures 1-6, a first preferred embodiment of the present plush toy bookmark invention will be described. As shown in Figure 1 bookmark 30 includes a top, head and torso portion 32; a bottom, torso and leg portion 34, and an intermediate member, preferably in the form of a strip, or ribbon 10 36, which is firmly attached to the top portion 32 as well as to the bottom portion 34 by any conventional means such as sewing or the equivalent. The present plush toy bookmark invention is intended for use by children as a bookmark. Its upper torso and head portion as well as the lower torso and leg portion are 15 preferably chosen to represent animals or cartoon ^{or human} characters which may be attractive to children. For example, in the Figure 1 embodiment, the face and forepaws of a bear are shown. Correspondingly, the Figure 2 rear, perspective view shows the back of the head, ears and torso of the bear character.

20 As may be seen, the plush toy bookmark of the present invention, provides not only a planar, elongated member that is placed between the pages of a book as a place marking, but also provides a unique way to secure the marker without having to physically attach to the page, such as, for example, a clip, and 25 to secure the marker at both ends of the book. Moreover, the plush toy ends of the bookmark provide a pleasing appearance to

children, and may be used as toys separate and apart from their function as bookmarks.

The strip, or ribbon 36 is preferably of a thin, cloth or cloth like material which can be placed between pages of a book and along its spine to function as a bookmark. The ribbon is preferably of a durable ^{Material} and will enable a firm connection to the top torso portion 32 and the bottom torso portion 34 to be made. Also, as a preferable option, the ribbon 36 may be of an elastomeric material so that it may stretch ^{in the direction indicated by the arrow 37} to accommodate the different heights of different books, as shown for example, in Figure 3. Preferably the length of the ribbon 36 is chosen to accommodate the most popular or some known sizes of children's books. However, in an embodiment wherein the ribbon 36 is made of elastomeric material, it will permit the bookmark 30 to be used with different sized books 40.

The upper torso portion 32, as well as the lower torso portion 34 are, preferably, 3-dimensional plush toys. As such, they function as abutments or anchors for the ribbon 36 of the bookmark. Other 3-dimensional forms, whether inanimate objects or representations of characters, may be used as abutment, or stop members as well. Because of their dimensions and firm attachment to the ribbon 36, the upper portion 32 and lower portion 34 function to keep the bookmark in place and not fall through the book when the book is picked up by the child. They also serve as a ready identifier for the location of the bookmark. With the present invention being incorporated into

different characters, such as an elephant, cat, rabbit and so forth, it is believed that a particular child may choose a particular character as a favorite for use as a bookmark and/or as a toy.

5 Referring to Figures 4, 5, and 6, the ribbon 36 is shown wrapped or coiled around the lower torso to provide for shortening the effective length of the ribbon and/or to convert the bookmark to be a small, plush toy. As shown in Figure 4, the ribbon 36 has been rolled around the lower torso portion 34 several times to form a roll 38. Preferably, the legs 42 and 44 of the lower torso portion are constructed so that they either point inward or have a bowed shape so that the distal ends of the legs and/or the knee regions of the legs have a distance between them in a resting position that is less than the width of the ribbon 36. Thus, when winding the ribbon 36 around the lower torso portion 34, the legs 42 and 44 must be spread apart so that the winding 38 can be accomplished. When the ribbon 36 is fully wound around the lower torso portion 34, the legs 42 and 44 are released, and they return to their original position, and as such perform a holding function to keep the winding 38 in place, i.e., prevent it from uncoiling.

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As shown in Figures 5 and 6, a rear, side, perspective, and a front, side, perspective view, the ribbon 36 has been fully wound around the lower torso portion 34 and the legs 42 and 44 are in their relaxed position. In this way, the ribbon 36 has been wound into a tight coil 38 which is kept in place by the

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pincher action of the legs 42 and 44. In this fashion, the bookmark of the present invention can be stored or used as a little, plush toy.

The upper torso and lower torso portions of the
5 bookmark of the present invention are plush toys as that term is
well known and used. Referring to Figure 5, for example, the
plush toy has an exterior covering 46 made of a plush material
such as, for example, a polyester. The filler material, shown
at 48 in Figure 5 are typically PVC pellets, or beans, peas or
10 other naturally occurring materials having a mean diameter of
several millimeters.

As shown above, the first preferred embodiment of the
present invention, as shown in Figures 1-6, has the shape, style
and overall configuration of a bear.

15 Referring to the alternate embodiment 50 illustrated
in Figures 7 and 8, the torso and head portions have the shape,
style and overall configuration of a panda. This alternate
embodiment also illustrates the use of fasteners on the plush toy
so that it may be used as a bracelet or otherwise attached
20 circumferentially around an object. Specifically, Velcro brand
fastening patches 49, and 51 are attached to the upper torso
portion and lower torso portion of the toy, on the under side,
so that, for example, the toy could be wrapped around a child's
wrist, arm, leg, etc., and the Velcro brand fasteners stuck
25 together to form a type of bracelet. Alternately, the fastening

patches could be placed on the outside portions of the toy, however, preferably they are placed as shown in Figure 7.

The alternate embodiment 52 of Figures 9 and 10, has a shape, style and overall configuration of a pig.

5 The embodiment 54 shown in Figures 11 and 12 is characterized as a dog. The Figure 12 embodiment shows an alternate fastener, which functions as does the fastener shown and described above with respect to Figure 7. In the Figure 12, fastener, a conventional snap fastener is shown, with a female portion 53 attached, conventionally, to the upper torso and the male portion ⁵⁵ ₅₄ of the snap fastener attached, conventionally, to the lower torso.

10 Referring to the alternate embodiment 56 Figures 13 and 14, a monkey is illustrated. The embodiment 58 Figures 15 and 16 has a shape, style and overall configuration of a rabbit and a mouse is shown in the embodiment 60 illustrated in Figures 17 and 18. In Figures 19 and 20, a zebra 62 illustrated and in Figures 21 and 22 a duck 64 shown. Finally, the embodiment 66 shown in Figures 23 and 24 is a representation of a squirrel. A B

15 While the invention has been described in terms of what are presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that the invention need not be limited to the disclosed embodiments. On the contrary, it is intended to cover various modifications and similar arrangements 20 included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims, the

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scope of which should be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and similar structures.